RV BUSINESS

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SUPPLIERS' SPECIAL—
Discover New Products For New Profits

Business Problems? The SBA Can Help

Monitor: The Third Annual Ad Of The Year

RV BUSINESS

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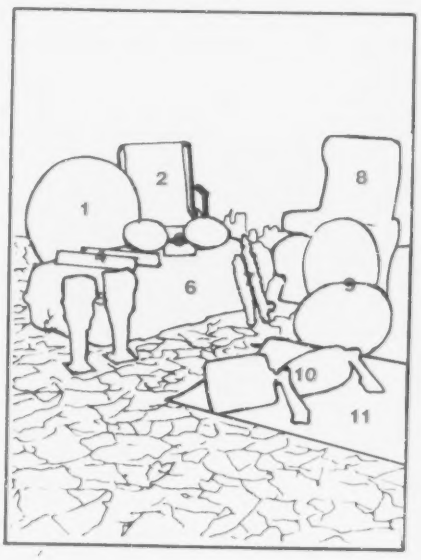
ON THE COVER: Our thanks to those companies who contributed their new products for our cover photo. The complete story is supplied on page 38. Photo: Paul Pribble.

(1)Valley Industries, tire cover; (2) Zip Dee, chair; (3) Pioneer, cassette player; (4) REC Specialties, interior light; (5) A&E Systems, electric jacks; (6) Carefree of Colorado, pod; (7) 4-Way Suspension Systems, shocks; (8) Sears Dura-Form, interior seat; (9) Wheel Masters, wheel covers; (10) Ramco, mirrors; (11) Carter Shade, awning.



Perspective

An analysis of RVB's monthly survey of its Dealer Advisory Board Members

GAYLORD MAXWELL

	NEW						USED					
	FOR MONTH			YEAR-TO-DATE			FOR MONTH			YEAR-TO-DATE		
	OCT '85	OCT '84	% CHANGE	1985	1984	% CHANGE	OCT '85	OCT '84	% CHANGE	1985	1984	% CHANGE
MOTORHOMES	102	89	+15%	1178	1147	+ 3	72	87	−17%	868	953	− 9%
TRAVEL TRAILERS	77	81	− 5%	935	993	− 6%	80	81	− 1%	868	923	− 6%
TRUCK CAMPERS	10	12	−17%	187	174	+ 7%	15	17	−12%	138	197	−30%
CAMPING TRAILERS	54	50	+ 8%	1506	1592	− 5%	20	15	+33%	368	299	+23%
FIFTH-WHEELS	25	19	+32%	285	344	−17%	6	12	−50%	89	95	− 6%

	FOR MONTH			YEAR-TO-DATE		
	OCT '85	OCT '84	% CHANGE	1985	1984	% CHANGE
SALES VOLUME	$7,750,352	$7,068,638	+10%	$90,362,909	$90,423,493	−less than 1%
TOTAL UNIT SALES	461	463	−less than 1%	6,422	6,717	−4%
NEW UNIT SALES	268	251	+ 7%	4,091	4,250	− 4%
USED UNIT SALES	193	212	− 9%	2,331	2,467	− 6%

October was one of the better months for members of RVB's Dealer Advisory Board (DAB). October '85 unit sales were almost identical with those of October '84, and sales volume was up 10 percent. A 7 percent increase in new-unit sales was offset by a 9 percent decrease in used-unit sales.

New motorhomes, camping trailers and fifth-wheels were in the up column while travel trailers and truck campers were down slightly. With the exception of camping trailers, all used categories were down.

Year-to-date, motorhomes and truck campers show slight increases in new-unit sales. Towables of all kinds are down. In the used column, only camping trailers show an increase.

Although dollar volume and new-unit sales were up for October, both dollars and units (new and used) are down slightly for the year-to-date.

Profits were generally rated lower than normal. Most dealers settled for fair to good grosses, but there were both poor and excellent marks in a few categories.

Some dealers are having a difficult time, but experienced, dedicated dealers are doing reasonably well. A few are having a banner year. Most dropouts are those who get in and out of the RV business according to the times.

MOTORHOMES

New-unit sales exceeding those of October '84 boosted this category into the plus column for year-to-date. Three percent isn't much, but, in a year in which motorized sales are down at the manufacturing level, it speaks well for the DAB members—professionals accustomed to a zigzag industry.
zagging industry.

Most of the motorhome dealers on the DAB did as well as or better then they did last October. The increase of 13 new units over last year is attributable to dramatically improved sales by two large dealers on the board.

Profits were generally fair to good.

TRAVEL TRAILERS

This is the only RV type in this report that shows minuses in all columns. The numbers are not large, however, but they do indicate a problem that trailer dealers have had all year. The reality is that 12 of the 18 DAB members who sell trailers are down for the year.

In spite of the general downturn, six DAB members have managed to increase trailer sales. One large trailer specialist actually doubled last year's figures—definitely an exception to the overall picture.

Used units sold rather well in October. Profits were generally rated fair.

TRUCK CAMPERS

New slide-in sales dropped a bit in October but the year-to-date figures is still up—actually the highest for any category. Used sales were down for the month and have the largest down year-to-date figure for any type.

Two dealers reported new-unit sales. One rated profits excellent, the other rated them poor.

CAMPING TRAILERS

The slight increase for the month is largely attributable to sales of a fold-down specialist who did much better than he did last year. Most dealers stayed about the same.

It has been a rather poor year for many camping trailer dealers. Twelve were down in new-unit sales and only six were up. However, two of the latter had dramatic increases that brought up the category total.

The fact that used sales for the year-to-date are up considerably suggests that dealers are generally more receptive to fold-downs as trade-ins.

Profits were generally rated from poor to good.

FIFTH WHEELS

The fact that twice as many dealers reported fiver sales for October of this year as did last year accounts for the excellent increase for the month. Most sold only one or two units.

Year-to-date, this category is down in new-unit sales more than any other category. Both fiver specialists on the DAB have lower numbers this year than last.

Used sales of this type were off considerably for the month but aren't far behind last year for the year-to-date.

Profits were rated fair to good. Δ

Perspective is a compilation of data provided by RVB's Dealer Advisory Board (DAB), a group comprised of 23 dealers representing a cross-section of the U.S. dealer body. This report is an attempt to reflect the current retail sales picture; it does not purport to indicate RV production or factory sales to dealers.

RVIA, OCTOBER

The marketing committee of the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association has announced that the total number of recreational vehicles shipped from manufacturers' plants during October 1985 was 29,900 units, down 4.8% from October 1984.

The shipment figures released by the association are contained in a report compiled for the membership by RVIA's marketing committee under the chairmanship of Allen Yoder Jr. of Jayco Incorporated, Middlebury, Indiana.

RV shipments were as follows in Oct. 1985	Oct. 1984	Percent Change	Cumulative 1985	Cumulative 1984	Percent Change
TRAVEL TRAILERS	4,300	4,400	- 2.3%	49,700	60,200	- 17.4%
PARK MODELS	800	700	+ 14.3%	6,400	6,000	+ 6.7%
FIFTH-WHEELS	2,200	1,900	+ 15.8%	18,200	17,300	+ 5.2%
TRUCK CAMPERS	400	500	- 20.0%	6,200	7,100	- 12.7%
MULTI-USE VEHICLES	12,600	13,300	- 5.3%	140,100	147,500	- 5.0%
TYPE A: MOTOR-HOMES	2,900	3,200	- 9.4%	29,400	35,300	- 16.7%
TYPE B: VAN CAMPERS	300	400	- 25.0%	5,800	5,900	- 1.7%
TYPE C: MINI MOTOR-HOMES	2,000	2,100	- 4.8%	25,500	29,300	- 13.0%
FOLDING CAMPING TRAILERS	2,200	3,200	- 31.3%	31,300	35,500	- 11.8%
TOTALS	27,700	29,700	- 6.7%	312,600	344,100	- 9.2%

WDA QUARTERLY SALES FIGURES

RV Business publishes a quarterly report of sales statistics from the Warehouse Distributors Association (WDA). The chart shown here is based upon a representative sampling of WDA members, as compiled in the third quarter of 1985. While these statistics are not intended to be fully indicative of the sales volume among distributors in the RV and MH industries, they are presented here as an insight into the supplier/distributor industry.

SALES VOLUME

	THIRD-QUARTER SALES VOLUME	
	PERCENT CHANGE 1984 to 1985	RANGE OF CHANGE
REGION 1	+ 17.6%	+ 33.3% to - 12.1%
REGION 2	+ 26.0%	+ 30.2% to + 4.2%
REGION 3	+ 2.3%	+ 60.6% to - 45.9%
REGION 4	- 2.4%	+ 57.0% to - 25.0%
REGION 5	- 2.0%	+ 13.5% to - 18.8%
REGION 6	+ 21.3%	+ 49.4% to - 3.7%

Region 1: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington, D.C. **Region 2:** Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee. **Region 3:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska,